

Greetings from the German Construction Industry Federation

Dear guests, speakers and colleagues

Building may be one of the oldest and most enduring human activities, but today's construction industry is subjected to constant change. The mission to erect sustainable, flexible and high-quality structures with ever more constrained budgets in ever-shorter time spans poses an almost insurmountable challenge. And yet our industry has to meet this challenge every day.

“The only constant is change”: We have seen many innovations come and go in the past decades and some have stayed to change the way we work. The rising demand on resources has increased societal awareness for sustainable action. Legislation across the globe has raised the bar for energy efficient building and as a construction industry we share the responsibility to adhere to ever-rising standards. This, in itself, places a strain on our well-established processes, as new designs and technologies have to be implemented, resulting in increasingly complex structures, each of which is unique.

One-sided contracts and increasing confrontation between the interests of owners and the industry have lead to the development of partnering models. This cooperative approach, based on mutual trust and common goals, has significantly improved results for all construction stakeholders.

While other sectors such as the aviation and automotive industries, having the advantage of stationary production, have long embraced new methods and tools for improving their processes, the construction industry continues to rely on tried and trusted methods. As today's projects are larger and more complex than ever before, construction needs new approaches. This explains the increasing use of Building Information Modelling. The key for real change is its broad use across all project phases by all key stakeholders as a tool to support more efficient processes. This development must be cultivated by private and public investors and standardised to foster broad implementation.

In order to meet the various, and sometimes conflicting, demands described above, it is necessary to develop more efficient, integrated, lean and stable processes. Building Information Modelling promises to be an integral part of this development. Its application in the construction process in the context of 5D can be a major step forward on the road to improve our everyday work.

In the name of the German Construction Industry Federation I wish you all two productive and successful conference days in Constance.

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